

PRESS RELEASE-III



ENCODE-IT Virtual Bootcamps Strengthen Women's Participation in AI-Supported Digital Transformation Across Europe

The ENCODE-IT project has successfully completed its international Virtual Bootcamp activities implemented by project partners APPIS, IGEA, and SDSN across Portugal, Türkiye, and Belgium. The bootcamps brought together women from different educational, professional, and social backgrounds in order to strengthen their digital competencies and introduce them to accessible, AI-supported production environments. The activities formed a central practical learning component of the ENCODE-IT project, which aims to empower women through digital inclusion, artificial intelligence literacy, and future-oriented technological skills. Participants included students, newly graduated adults, unemployed women, housewives, and professionals interested in improving their digital knowledge and adapting to ongoing technological transformation processes. Throughout the bootcamp sessions, participants explored how artificial intelligence can support creativity, communication, productivity, workflow management, and digital production. The educational content moved beyond traditional coding-focused approaches and instead adopted an innovative AI-first methodology centered on accessibility, experimentation, and practical application.

Participants were introduced to modern AI-supported tools and platforms such as ChatGPT, Claude, Cursor, GitHub Copilot, Google AI Studio, Replit, Bubble, and several no-code and low-code systems. Through hands-on activities and live demonstrations, women learned how AI can assist with idea generation, prompt writing, workflow organization, digital content creation, and simple application development.

The bootcamps also focused strongly on prompt engineering, algorithmic thinking, workflow logic, and AI-supported product creation. Participants practiced writing structured prompts, understanding how AI systems process instructions, and experimenting with practical digital outputs. Many participants experienced AI-assisted production processes for the first time and developed increased confidence regarding their ability to participate actively in digital environments. An important aspect of the activities was the creation of inclusive and supportive learning spaces where women from different countries could collaborate, exchange ideas, and learn from one another. The international structure of the bootcamps encouraged intercultural communication, peer learning, and confidence building while also reducing technological anxiety often experienced by beginners entering digital fields.

The ENCODE-IT consortium observed strong participant engagement throughout the activities. Many women expressed that the bootcamps helped them better understand the practical role of artificial intelligence in everyday life, academic work, and future professional environments. Participants also highlighted that the accessible teaching methods and hands-on exercises made complex technological concepts easier to understand and apply. By completing these Virtual Bootcamp activities, ENCODE-IT continues to contribute to reducing the digital gender gap and promoting women's active participation in digital transformation processes across Europe. The project demonstrates that when technology education is designed through inclusive, practical, and participant-centered methodologies, artificial intelligence can become an accessible and empowering tool for everyone.